



## News Release

**For Immediate Release:**  
Thursday, March 17, 2011

**Media Contact:**  
David Neville  
Tobacco Prevention and Control Program  
(o) 801-538-6917 (c) 801-386-1316

### **Health, Dental Clinics Team Up to Help Smokers Quit** *Uninsured can get vouchers for stop smoking medications*

(Salt Lake City) – Through a new partnership between the Utah Department of Health Tobacco Prevention and Control Program (TPCP), Health Clinics of Utah (HCU), and Family Dental Plan (FDP), uninsured smokers can receive vouchers for the free stop-smoking medications bupropion or Chantix. Smokers who visit their HCU physician or FDP dentist can take their prescription and voucher to any Smith’s Pharmacy or Smith’s Marketplace Pharmacy to be filled. Voucher recipients will also be referred to the Utah Tobacco Quit Line at 1.800.QUIT.NOW (784-8669) for free stop-smoking advice from a certified quit coach.

Patterned after the TPCP’s successful partnerships with Medicaid and the Association for Utah Community Health (AUCH), the Tobacco Cessation Medications for the Uninsured Project seeks to lower the burden of smoking on Utahns who have no health care coverage. Reaching out to the uninsured requires partnerships with many locations throughout Utah. Including a partner with pharmacies across the state made logistical sense.

“With 47 locations in Utah, our pharmacy network can help uninsured smokers receive medications to aid them in their next quit attempt,” said Blair Woolf, Director of Pharmacy for Smith’s Food and Drug Centers. “As an integral part of the community, Smith’s is glad to assist in the new partnership,” he added.

According to Steve Ipsen, Registered Nurse and Director of Health Clinics of Utah, helping smokers quit improves not just their immediate health, but their future health and their family’s health, too. “When smokers stop smoking, significant improvement

happens for a range of respiratory symptoms and overall quality of life. Quitting tobacco is difficult. The easier we can make it, the more smokers will transition to being ex-smokers,” Ipsen added.

For more information regarding the partnership, including clinic locations and schedules, please visit <http://health.utah.gov/clinics>. For free help quitting tobacco, call the Utah Tobacco Quit Line at 1.800.QUIT.NOW or visit [www.UtahQuitNet.com](http://www.UtahQuitNet.com).

Tobacco prevention and control efforts in Utah are working, but more needs to be done. Tobacco use costs Utah taxpayers \$369 million in smoking-related medical expenses and \$294 million in lost productivity each year. Cost-effective anti-tobacco programs and quit services provide a return on investment through the resulting health and economic benefits for the state. In addition to saving lives, each percentage point reduction in the smoking rate equals savings of \$315 million in future health care costs.

# # #

*The mission of the Utah Department of Health is to protect the public's health through preventing avoidable illness, injury, disability and premature death, assuring access to affordable, quality health care, and promoting healthy lifestyles.*